

# Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Exercises

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Carpal tunnel syndrome is a painful progressive condition caused by compression of a key nerve in the wrist. It occurs when the median nerve, which runs from the forearm into the hand, becomes pressed or squeezed at the wrist. Symptoms usually start gradually, with pain, weakness, or numbness in the hand and wrist, radiating up the arm. As symptoms worsen, people might feel tingling during the day, and decreased grip strength may make it difficult to form a fist, grasp small objects, or perform other manual tasks. In some cases no direct cause of the syndrome can be identified. Most likely the disorder is due to a congenital predisposition - the carpal tunnel is simply smaller in some people than in others. However, the risk of developing carpal tunnel syndrome is more common in those performing assembly line work or computer work. The exercises below are intended to help prevent carpal tunnel syndrome. A quick five minute exercise warm-up before starting your work day can help prevent work-related injuries.

**A.** Extend and stretch both wrists and fingers acutely as if they are in a hand-stand position. Hold for a count of 5.

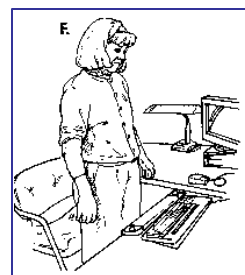
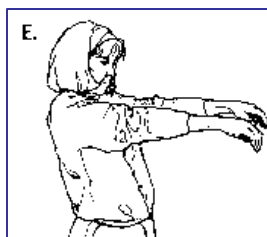
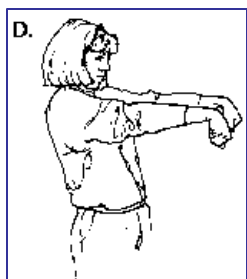
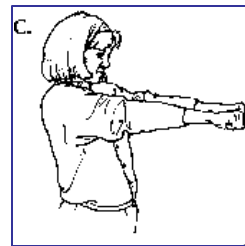
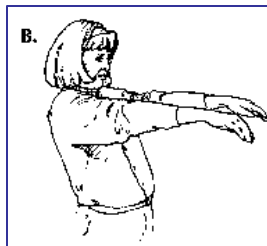
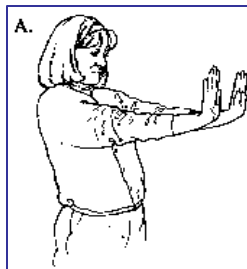
**B.** Straighten both wrists and relax fingers.

**C.** Make a tight fist with both hands.

**D.** Then bend both wrists down while keeping the fist. Hold for a count of 5.

**E.** Straighten both wrists and relax fingers, for a count of 5.

**F.** The exercise should be repeated 10 times. Then let your arms hang loosely at the side and shake them for a few seconds.



\*The information provided is not intended as a substitute for medical professional help or advice but is to be used only as an aid to help reduce the risk of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. A physician should always be consulted for any health problem.

*Some portions adapted from: Office of Research Services, Division of Safety, National Institutes of Health; and the University of Oklahoma Orthopaedic & Reconstructive Research Foundation*